



HEARD ACROSS MONTANA

An electronic newsletter in support of public safety services in Montana
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IM Weekly Highlights

- Fleet Mapping Training is taking place in Great Falls, August 4 and 5.
- Trainers from the Office of Emergency Communications gave two, back-to-back, SOP training sessions in Helena and Billings on July 28 and 29. The sessions were well received.
- The Broken Pick site is now complete.
- A new 10-foot microwave dish is up and aligned at the Cominco site.
- SOW and bid reviews continue on PSIC-funded sites.
- The MT National Guard Request for Proposals for last-mile hops is now available at this link:

https://www.fbo.gov/index?print_preview=1&s=opportunity&mode=form&id=7d8bbc589247648b2ba0fe950bcd939e&tab=core&tabmode=list

SIEC Holds Productive Meeting

By E. Wing Spooner espooner@mt.gov

Members of the Statewide Interoperability Executive Council (SIEC) had a productive meeting on Wed., July 15, in Helena. Chairperson Dick Clark, Chief Information Officer (CIO), ITSD-Dept. of Administration, held a roundtable discussion regarding perceptions of the role of the SIEC and emphasized the importance of developing a plan for building, sustaining and funding interoperability. The group was assigned the task of generating ideas for developing private-public partnerships to enhance public safety communications.

Scott Bradford, Public Safety Services Bureau (PSSB), gave a briefing on the history of the SIEC and past accomplishments, including the development of a communications technical standard, guidance on the advancement of Montana's two Concept Demonstration Projects, and input on the Statewide Communication Interoperability Plan (SCIP). This presentation was followed by Carl Hotvedt, PSSB Chief, who informed members about the history of legislative allocations to the IM Project.

Kevin Bruski, IM Executive Director, and Ian Marquand, Public Affairs and Outreach Consultant, presented the 30-minute PowerPoint presentation that will be used in upcoming community outreach meetings, the first of which is scheduled for Tuesday, Aug. 4 at 9:30 am at the Broadwater

School and Public Library, 201 N. Spruce, in Townsend.

The presentation began with a definition of Interoperability and went on to stress that no person should lose his or her life because public safety responders cannot communicate. He explained how the IM Project began, the concept of consortia, and gave a timeline of how interoperability has evolved statewide. He also explained the mission, vision, goals, work underway, and future plans outlined in the SCIP. He went on to describe IM objectives, Federal and state standards, and Montana's two Concept Demonstration Projects (CPD). He also illustrated the IM network design and system coverage and described the benefits of the system as well as challenges related to funding and sustainability. Ian and Kevin reviewed the IM outreach plan, which involves using this presentation and a Frequently Asked Questions brochure to distribute to county commissioners, chiefs of police and other elected officials to explain the IM project and gather input regarding sustainability.

Will Soller, Auditor, explained the results of the Legislative Performance Audit that was performed last fall and issued in Jan., 2009. The official audit results may be found under 'Statewide Radio Communications Interoperability' at: <http://leg.mt.gov/content/Publications/Audit/Report/08P-03.pdf>. He highlighted the report's major recommendations. As a second assignment, the SIEC was asked to review the report and be prepared to discuss it and formulate responses at upcoming meetings.

Wing Spooner, PSSB, gave a brief presentation regarding the *Heard Across Montana* (HAM) electronic newsletter produced and distributed by PSSB. She reported that more than 850 individuals are on the distribution list for this weekly publication, which helps keep local, state, tribal, federal, and international entities informed about Montana's grassroots approach to interoperability.

The last assignment SIEC members were given was to start thinking about networking with hospitals and the Indian Health Services to develop options for working together to better prepare for emergencies.

The next SIEC meeting will be held in Sept., with the date and location—including video and audio conferencing options to reduce travel requirements—will be announced.

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IM Technical Committee Members Briefed on RVA and Microwave and Network Design

By E. Wing Spooner espooner@mt.gov

IM Technical Committee members received an update Monday, July 27, on the US Air Force (USAF) Remote Visual Assessment (RVA) Monitoring Project. Mark Adams and Constance Taylor, Northrop Grumman, provided an overview of the program, which is designed to connect video surveillance of the launch facilities around Central Montana and send signals back to Malmstrom Air Force Base. Flat panel microwave point-to-point panels made by Motorola are proposed to be installed at both the Sullivan and South Moccasin sites. Members discussed panel locations in regard to the climbing ladder and safety issues as well as maximum tower loading issues. Mark highlighted the fact that panels can be located in between tower legs, taking advantage of space that is not useable otherwise. The RVA program is fast tracking, and work should be complete this year.

Merle Watt and Todd Harrod, Alcatel-Lucent Business Development, gave a presentation on future trends in microwave and network design, emphasizing the features of a new generation digital microwave radio for point-to-point wireless communication as well as indoor high power amplifiers.

In other business, participants received sub-committee updates on frequencies, encryption, network design and dispatch connectivity. June Task Items were reviewed and the Five-Year Plan was updated. Roger Smith, IM Radio System Administrator, gave an update on Motorola firmware issues, and again emphasized the importance of having radio inventories completed by Aug. 11. Jack Spillman reported that the EF Johnson handheld and mobile radios have met basic qualifications and are now approved as working on the IM system.

Bob McWilliams appointed a sub-group to work on recommendations for where fencing is needed and to make suggestions for the type of fencing needed for various applications. A group also was appointed to draw up recommendations for standardized trunking groups and the use of plain text. Montana is still dealing with 10-code issues, even though the Mutual Aid Handbook started recommending using plain text back in the 1980's. These standardizations will eliminate confusion, especially during an incident.

The next IMTC meeting is scheduled for Mon., Aug. 24, from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm, at the MACo offices, 2715 Skyway Drive, in Helena.

CITIG Announces Canadian Voice Interoperability Workshop

By E. Wing Spooner espooner@mt.gov

The Canadian Interoperability Technology Interest Group (CITIG) is hosting its third Canadian Voice Interoperability Workshop in Halifax, Nova Scotia on Nov. 15-18 at the Marriott.

The workshop brings together a broad base of public safety and emergency management practitioners to develop a mutual understanding of key voice and data interoperability issues facing today's public safety sector. With a focus on information exchange, topic-specific discussion and interactive break-outs, the session aims to support and promote the transfer of best practices and experience as well as the development of a more unified approach to public safety interoperability across the country, between nations and internationally.

Delegates can expect to be "put to work" during extensive break-out sessions that will address development of the Canadian Communications Interoperability Plan (CCIP); the Province-Wide Communications Interoperability Plans (PSCIPs); governance models; SOPs; and Training, Exercises and Usage. Participants will come away with real-world insights, practical knowledge, and a common-sense approach to moving forward.

Registration must be made online in advance at www.cacp.ca or by calling (613) 233-1106. Cost is \$450 + tax, which includes all plenary sessions, Sunday evening meet and greet, Monday evening reception, 3 breakfasts, 2 lunches and 5 refreshment breaks. For more information about CITIG, please visit this website: www.cprc.org/citig.

Upcoming Meetings

Aug. 4

IM Outreach Meeting

Townsend • 9:30 am

Broadwater School and Public Library, 201 N. Spruce St.

Aug. 4-5

Fleet Mapping Training

Great Falls • 9:00 am - 5:00 pm

Great Falls Police Dept., 112 1st Street South

To register, contact Dorothy Gremaux at 406-535-1800

or e-mail her at dgremaux@ci.lewistown.mt.us

Aug. 5

Tri-County Consortium

Helena • 10:00 am

Dept. of Corrections Annex Bldg., Behind 515 N. Sanders St.

Aug. 6

Northern Tier Consortium

Havre • 9:00 am

Great Northern Inn, 1345 1st St.